

Famous Thief and Thief-Taker

M. R. JOHN SWEENEY'S detective reminiscences. "At Scotland Yard," and the extraordinary arrest and conviction of one of their own spies, John William Campbell, set me re-reading a book that fascinated my boyhood, the "Life of Vidocq"—certainly the most crafty, daring and successful of criminals when crime was his trade, and of detectives when he had turned thief-taker. It is odd to think that the most successful entertained in London in the year 1845 was this treacherous scoundrel. Vast and fashionable crowds used to hear him in the Cosmopolitan tell the extraordinary story of his life. He donned the chalice, his galley dress and the huge iron balls which he had worn at Brest; and, as he told his stories, he changed his face irretrievably again and again, appearing successively as a pickpocket, a coal heaver, a galley slave, a Jew, a scullion and a nun.

Vidocq had in a month as many adventures as most desperadoes have in a lifetime. Here is the record of a few weeks' experiences. For an assault on a rival, whom he surprised supping with his mistress, Francine, in a tavern, he was imprisoned in Lille in St. Peter's tower. Hither Francine brought him daily, and piecemeal, in her muff, the uniform of a police inspector, which Vidocq donned, and, with a face which his own mother would have failed to recognize—for he had a Garriqué's power of mimicry—he walked boldly to the prison gate. The gatekeeper, an old galley slave, sharp-eyed as a lynx, saluted the police inspector, and threw open the gate with eager deference. Instead of trying a white Perdu, Vidocq next day swaggered through the town, enjoying the hue and cry after himself he heard at every turn. He had hardly sat down to dinner in a tavern when a sergeant and four men came thither for him.

Vidocq went straight up to the sergeant and said: "If you are looking for that scoundrel, Vidocq, hide here in this closet, and the moment he enters I shall let you know." When the sergeant and his men had packed themselves into the closet, Vidocq turned the key, and, shouting: "It is Vidocq himself who has locked you in!" bolted. Three days later, however, he was caught and locked up in a dungeon with a criminal called Calandrino, who had already worked a secret hole half through the wall, which in another three days, with Vidocq's help, became an apparently practicable breach. Vidocq, having stripped himself stark naked, thrust his body half through the hole, which then gripped him like a trap. He was horribly lacerated and had to shriek for the guards to extricate him.

A week later his trial came on, and, with eighteen other culprits, he was taken to the court, and waited there in an ante-room for his turn to be arraigned. The prisoners were attended by two gendarmes within the ante-room, while without it was guarded by a corporal and a troop of soldiers. One of the two gendarmes, having been summoned into the court, left behind him his hat and cloak, which Vidocq donned instantly, and, taking another prisoner by the arm, he led him to the door, which the corporal threw open to them, and both were free. But the reckless Vidocq was never free for long. He was flung in prison on the charge of attempting to murder Francine—who had stabbed herself in despair of his love—but from this dungeon he escaped by the carelessness of the turnkey. Again taken, and flung into a dungeon whose walls were five feet thick, he was with the help of two other desperadoes, dug down beneath them, only to find, when the last stone was knocked out, that they had broken into the river Seine, which oozed, and almost drowned them like rats! Nevertheless Vidocq a day or two later effected his escape by springing from the coach in which he was being conveyed to another prison.

The Prince of Detectives.

These early adventures of Vidocq are remarkable only for being crowded into so short a space of time. They do not compare in daring, resource, alertness and good luck with some of his galley slave experiences. But these galley slave experiences themselves pale their ineffectual fire before the number, daring and success of his exploits as a detective. During the eighteen years of his detective service he cleared the slums of Paris of more than 20,000 rogues.

Not the least daring of his detective exploits was his first—his capture, single-handed, of one of the fiercest, craftiest and physically most powerful of all the desperadoes of Paris—Watrin, the coiner. Having tracked Watrin to his lair, above a cobbler's shop, he went at midnight, single-handed, to the spot, and, meeting the coiner in the doorway, he rushed upon him, only to receive a tremendous blow which almost stunned him. Watrin retreated into the cobbler's shop, and armed himself with a knife, which would have dealt certain death to the unarmed Vidocq if he had followed the coiner into his lair.

Vidocq, therefore, pretended to retreat, making a sound as of steps retreating, which tempted Watrin to put his head out of the window to make sure of his enemy's departure; whereupon Vidocq, seizing him by the hair, dragged him by sheer strength of muscle through the window, and, wrenching the knife from Watrin's grasp, he bound his arms and, single-handed, hauled him to the guard house. To the amazement of M. Henri, the chief of the police, and all of his staff.

Even on his deathbed, at the ripe age of 82, Vidocq played with his usual thoroughness and success a double part. Finding his end near, he sent for a priest, whom he edited by his profound penitence and unctuous devotion. Hardly, however, had the breath left his body than no less than ten young women appeared, each claiming to be his sole heir, and each backing her claim by the production of a will in which this aged Lothario had left her all his worldly goods! All ten went empty away, however, since Vidocq had finally bequeathed his entire property to his landlady.

A Famous Prison Breaker.

Vidocq's adventurous life and edifying end recall those of Casanova, an expurgated edition of whose memoirs appeared a year or two since. The Inquisition had flung him, on a charge of sorcery, into one of the cells of the Piombi, in Venice—a cell under the clouds, in which it was impossible to stand upright, lighted only through a narrow grating above the door, but heated by the raging sun to the temperature of an oven.

While his cell was being swept out, Casanova was allowed to walk in the corridor, where one day he found in a heap of rubbish an iron bolt, two feet long and one inch thick, and a fragment of black marble, both of which he managed to smuggle beneath his coat into his cell. There he set to work to grind the bolt into a point upon the piece of marble, intending to pierce the cell door, lower himself by ropes made out of strips of his bedding into the hall of the Inquisition beneath, where would lie in wait until the door was opened, and then make a desperate rush to regain freedom.

By pretending to have a toothache—for which a gun flint steeped in vinegar was supposed to be a cure—he obtained a couple of flints from his jailer, and with these he struck a light from tinder made out of a scrap of the stuffing of his coat. But on the very day on which the flints were at last pierced he was transferred to another cell! Then, of course, the hole in the floor was discovered and the discovery redoubled the vigilance of the furious jailer. Nevertheless, Casanova contrived to smuggle his tool into the

next cell, and to instruct the monk confined therein to pierce the ceiling of his cell, climb into the intervening space between it and the roof, and make a hole in Casanova's ceiling. In ten days the monk had pierced his ceiling, hiding the orifice with wooden figures of the saints, when a spy of the Inquisition was thrust into Casanova's cell.

This spy, who was even more superstitious than he was astute, Casanova persuaded into the belief that the Virgin of the Rosary had assured him in a vision that an angel would descend from the ceiling to set them free on a certain day and hour. At that day and hour the monk tumbled down through the cell ceiling into Casanova's arms. When, however, with no little difficulty they had worked their way to the roof they found that there was no hold to which to fasten their ropes, and they had to break through one of the former windows and descend into the palace. They broke their way

through windows and doors till they reached the massive front door, which was impregnable and locked.

When morning broke Casanova donned the gorgeous clothes in which he had entered the prison, and, thrusting his head from a side grating, signalled to a passerby to summon the porter, who came trembling, thinking he had locked in overnight some Venetian magnate. He unfastened the great door apologetically, and Casanova and the monk passed out free.—T. P.'s Weekly.

Moccasined Dogs.

(New England Farmer.)

In Alaska even dogs wear shoes—at least part of the time. It is not on account of the cold, for a shaggy Eskimo dog will live and be frisky when a man would freeze to death. The dog does all the work of dragging and carrying, which in the country (as to the horses, and in trotting over the rough ice of the mountain passes, his feet soon become bruised

and sore. Then his driver makes him soft little moccasins of buckskin or reindeer skin, and fits them on with stout thongs of leather. In this way he will travel easily, until his feet are thoroughly heated up; then he bites and tears his shoes with his sharp, wolflike teeth, and eats them up.

Wonderful animals are these dogs of Alaska. Although they are only little fellows—not more than half the size of a big Newfoundland—they sell from \$25 to \$200 each, more than an ordinary horse will sell for in this country. They will draw 300 pounds each on a sled, and they are usually driven in teams of six. They need no lines to guide them, for they readily obey the sound of their master's voice, turning or stopping at a word.

But the Eskimo dogs have their faults. Like many boys, they are overfond of having good things to eat. Consequently they have to be watched closely, or they will attack and devour stores left in their way, especially bacon, which must be hung out of their reach. At night, when camp is pitched, the moment a blanket is thrown upon the ground they will trot in and curl up, and neither cuffs nor kicks suffice to budge them. They lie as close

to the men who own them as possible, and the miners cannot wrap themselves so close that they won't get under the blanket with him. They are human, too, in their disinclination to get out in the morning.

Boy Trials.

(Philadelphia Bulletin.)

Willie—I earned a nickel today. Father—Are you sure? How much did you do?

Willie—Oh, I moved the piano and beat the parlor rug and emptied all the ashes.

Father—Well, a nickel is a whole lot of money.

Not Tested Yet.

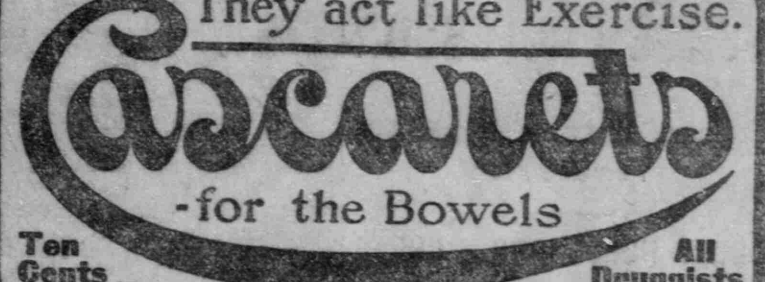
(Philadelphia Press.)

Cassidy—Tis a foine red flannel shirt ye boy on ye.

Cassidy—Ay, 'tis foine stuff and a great bargain. Cassidy—it looks good, but does it shrink in the washin'?

Cassidy—I dunno. Shure, Orvie only had it a month.

They act like Exercise.



-for the Bowels

Ten Cents

All Druggists

THE FIRST WIRELESS MESSAGE EVER RECEIVED IN SALT LAKE CITY!

As usual, Utah's Greatest Department Store in the Van of the Commercial Progress Procession!

Read and heed! Tell Your Friends! Spread the Good News!

POLAR STAR "SPACE ANNIE-LATING" TELEGRAPH CO.
SANTA CLAUS, Sole Proprietor.

1-AD. BO. 12 NIGHT-PAID.

Received at

SALT LAKE CITY,

Dec. 9, 1904.

Z. C. M. I.
I note that your mammoth store contains by far the greatest, grandest, most useful selection of such things as I require to make Western people happy, and Z. C. M. I. is hereby designated as my official distributing center for Salt Lake City and vicinity. Greetings to all. Peace on earth, good will to men.

SANTA CLAUS.

A FEW SUGGESTIONS

As to the things Santa Claus will select from the Big, Reliable Store with which to bring happiness and good cheer to thousands of Salt Lake people:—

Ladies' and Misses' Suits..



Very latest styles, in fancy mixtures, very newest patterns. A most complete showing at very low prices. A nice present for a husband to give his wife. In

Ladies' Skirts

We are showing some remarkable values. Nobby, dressy skirts for street wear as well as for indoor functions. They're man-tailored from excellent all-wool fabrics.



Ladies' Furs

In collars, sets and muffs, of genuine well-seasoned furs that are guaranteed to give satisfaction. Fine line of children's Fur Sets. We show some very attractive articles that will be greatly appreciated as Christmas presents. Prices consistent with values.

Our Prices Are Low, but Every Garment Is Full of Reliability and Style.



Ribbons

A most beautiful line of Ribbons in all widths, colors and popular designs and materials.



Lace Handkerchiefs

and Fancy Handkerchiefs of all good kinds make neat presents, as there's not a lady in the land that does not enjoy carrying a pretty handkerchief, and she can't have too many of them. We show a very striking line in the newest designs, rightly priced.

Fancy Neckwear, Etc.

A pretty embroidered or drawn-work collar always makes a dainty and inexpensive present. We show many desirable effects.

Jewelry Of All Kinds

Silverware

In single pieces and sets. Don't fail to look our splendid assortment through.



Fancy Baskets

The most beautiful line of fancy Baskets you ever saw. New and novel designs and prices very low for such good articles.

Gloves

In the very newest shades and reliable makes. We do the glove business of the city.

Ladies' Belts

Made from various colored leather, also velvet and satin, with handsome buckles. A most attractive variety in this season's newest novelties. Fine ones at 50 cents and up.



Ladies' Waists

A most complete line of exclusive and pretty styles, in silks, wools and mixtures. Some plain, others handsomely trimmed. For an ideal Christmas present, take a Lady's Waist. We will be pleased to help the men in making their selections.



Vases

Umbrella Holders

Jardinières

Bric-a-Brac of all sorts. A immense line of useful and decorative pieces. CHINAWARE—Largest stock in city.



Sofa Pillows..

AND Fancy Goods

Really artistic designs, carefully made needle work, embroidery and painting at surprisingly low prices.

Dress Goods

NOVELTY DRESS PATTERNS, SILKS AND VELVETS of all shades, and all new fabrics. FINE OPERA COATS—Elegant for Gifts.

Purses and Bags

In almost endless variety. Such qualities can be found nowhere else at prices we name.

Thousands of other new and desirable presents too numerous to name can be found in our various departments. Come early, while the most beautiful things can be had.

Z. C. M. I. Utah's Greatest Department Store

